

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

פרשת ויגש אליו יהודה תשפ"ד – HASHEM'S STORY

So, do you know the story of Yosef and the brothers?

Of course you do! Yosef's brothers were envious of Yaakov Avinu's special relationship with him so they sold him as a slave and he ended up in Mitzrayim. Yosef ends up in jail, and then, through a series of turns of events, became the ruler of the entire land of Egypt, and ultimately ended up providing sustenance for his brothers and for his father.

Sounds about right? Well, that is NOT the story at all! In fact, it is the exact opposite of the real story.

The real story, as Dovid Hamelech succinctly tells it in Tehilim (105:17) is as follows:

לעבד נמכר יוסף נשלח לפניהם איש לעבד נמכר יוסף - Hashem sent a man before them; Yosef was sold as a slave.

The history of the Jewish nation was being written. Hashem told Avraham Avinu that his descendants would end up in Mitzrayim. To lay the groundwork for their stay there, Hashem had to send someone ahead of time to put down roots. Yosef was chosen to be that man. To facilitate that, Hashem orchestrated that the brothers sell him as a slave who ends up in Mitzrayim.

Yes, the brothers' selling him was not the impetus that landed him in Mitzrayim. The exact opposite is the case; Hashem's will to land Yosef in Mitzrayim was the impetus for the brothers' decision to sell him.

No human being has the power to harm another person. If a human does – seemingly – hurt another, they are just a stick being used by Hashem to fulfill His will. If it wouldn't have been this stick, it would have been a different one. הרבה שלוחים למקום

That is why Dovid Hamelech did not write it in the chronological order of events as *לעבד נמכר יוסף נשלח לפניהם איש*

Rather, he wrote it in the “correct” order of events: *נשלח לפניהם איש לעבד נמכר יוסף*. Hashem's plan to send Yosef to Mitzrayim preceded the brothers' “idea” to sell Yosef.

We find this exact sentiment in the words Yosef used to calm his brothers' unease when he revealed himself to them. He tells them (Bereishis 44:5) *לפניכם* - *Do not be sad, and let it not trouble you that you sold me here, for it was to save lives that Hashem sent me before you.*

The simple reading of the word *לפניכם* in this Posuk is that Hashem orchestrated this entire chain of events for your benefit (See Rashi and Rashbam)

The deeper understanding of the word *לפניכם*, however, is that Yosef was telling his brothers this central and important principle of Emunah & Bitachon: *“The decision to have me sold to Mitzrayim was made a long time before it ever entered your minds. It was the will of Hashem that I be imprisoned in Mitzrayim, as a way of purifying and refining me for my role as the ruler of Egypt. You were just the sticks that Hashem used to put His Master Plan into action”*

As Dovid Hamelech states (ibid.) *אמרתי צרפתי עד עת בא דברו*

Yosef was imprisoned and shackled until the time came for the word of Hashem to be fulfilled; he was tested and refined and made ready to withstand the tribulations of ruling Mitzrayim. (Based on the Malbim and on the understanding of Rav Avigdor Miller Zatzal)

There is no such thing as a “turn of events” or a “random situation”. Everything is predetermined by Hashem, masterminded by Hashem and orchestrated by Hashem. Yes, we have bechirah, free will, to decide if we opt to be the stick that Hashem uses to fulfill His plan, but our bechira is limited to our thoughts and decisions only, as the results, outcomes and actual events that take place are totally in Hashem's realm, and if He wants them to happen they will; if he doesn't want them to happen, they won't. The story is always Hashem's story. (See Malbim to Mishlei 19:21)

Good Shabbos!

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